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RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA 0618

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001642

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/05/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EU](#) [NL](#) [RU](#) [YI](#) [KV](#)
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/EU: KOSOVO IS TOP PRIORITY FOR GYMNICH

REF: SECSTATE 123576

Classified By: Andrew Schofer, Political Counselor, for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: On September 5, 2007, POLOFF delivered reftel points to Desiree Kopmels, EU correspondent for the Dutch MFA. In discussions the next day, Ms. Kopmels emphasized that the Netherlands would push for the EU to send a united message to Belgrade and Pristina: 'get to a solution.' Kopmels indicated the Gymnich agenda will preclude significant progress on other issues. END SUMMARY

12. (C) KOSOVO: The EU ministers will discuss Kosovo during a two-hour working lunch on Friday. The Netherlands will push for a united EU message to Belgrade and Pristina: 'get to a solution.' Kopmels cited three concerns about the debate. First, too much internal EU deliberation, such as reviewing scenarios, and a less-than-unified public position, could permit the two sides avoid action. Second, the U.S. message seems weighted in favor of Kosovo's independence, and that may prompt Kosovo to refuse any agreement. Third, the EU will find it 'very difficult' to support a unilateral declaration of independence absent a new UN Security Council Resolution.

13. (C) OTHER ISSUES:

-- 'Strategic Partners' Discussion (Russia): The EU will discuss China, Russia, Africa and other 'strategic partners' during a 2.5 hour meeting Saturday. In this brief time, Kopmels expects that 'nothing much will happen.' Kopmels expressed frustration that Russia is so good at taking advantage of differences among member states within the EU.

-- Intergovernmental Conference: The Netherlands agrees with Portugal that discussions of the EU should stay at the technical level, and not re-open political issues, to avoid tearing apart the June decision.

-- Iran: FM Verhagen grew frustrated after extensive questioning from the Dutch parliament on September 5 about purported U.S. plans to attack Iran. The Dutch remain committed to the 'dual track' approach. Kopmels asked for details on the next Iran sanctions resolution.

-- Middle East: The Netherlands welcomes the U.S. 'reenergized' involvement in the region. Current Dutch policy will continue -- humanitarian aid but no contact with Hamas. Kopmels suggested that it was key to keep the cooperative Arab states involved.
Gallagher